

Presentation provided January 5, 2011

Chairman Hollandsworth and members of the Joint Appropriations and Policy Committees, for the record my name is Darlene Staffeldt (S T A F F E L D T) and I am your State Librarian.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to speak to you today. I would like to introduce Kris Schmitz, Central Services Manager and Jennie Stapp, Director of the Digital Library.

During my presentation today, I will occasionally refer to one of two documents, which are being distributed now. They include:

- (1) A twelve page hand out that follows my presentation, and
- (2) The 2011 legislative snapshot booklet.

The State Library was originally established in the 1929 Legislative Assembly; over the years, resources have changed but our public purpose has remained consistent: to ensure that all Montanans have access to the highest quality information in order that **Montanans, including you, your friends, neighbors and constituents**, can make informed decisions regarding situations that impact our lives on a daily basis. We accomplish this by creating and supporting services that meet the information needs of Montanans and by providing unmatched support to libraries throughout Montana.

In part, the Mission of the Montana State Library, found on page 2 of your handout, is to:

- Ensure that all Montana citizens have access to information created by their government,
- Support the role of all Montana libraries in delivering quality library content and services to their patrons,
- And ensure that Montanans who are visually or physically handicapped are provided access to library resources.

In order to carry out our functions, we have evolved into an operation able to manage the incredible amount of information created by Montana's government. And we further ensure that all Montana libraries, from Brady to Bozeman, have equal access to these same information resources.

We provide quality library services to 12,000 state employees. We make our online collections of state government and natural resources information freely available, around the clock, via the Internet to all citizens in Montana and beyond. We directly serve the 81 public libraries in Montana and directly or indirectly serve all 761 Montana libraries. And we serve approximately 3,500 Montanans who are visually or physically handicapped and thus unable to read traditional print materials.

The State Library is governed by a seven member board. Five members are appointed by the Governor. The remaining two members are the Superintendent of Public Instruction and an appointee of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The chair of the commission is Don Allen of Billings. Information on the other Commission members is provided on page 2 of your handout. They work hard to ensure that all areas of Montana are represented and that the State Library works hard to meet the goals of our current strategic plan. These goals are to:

1. Acquire and manage relevant quality content that meets the needs of Montanans.
2. Provide Montanans with convenient, high quality, and cost-effective access to library services.
3. Provide consultation and leadership to enable Montanans to reach their goals.
4. Promote partnerships and encourage collaboration among partners and patrons.

And to ensure that

5. MSL is a well-run organization.

In a world where everyone begins his or her work by searching Google and people often prefer to access information online, the role of libraries is changing. Over the course of this year with the help of our partners, we will evaluate our current Long Range Plan, which expires in December 2011 and we will develop a new plan with goals and strategic objectives. The URL of the tool to help us with this process can be found on the bottom of page 3 in your handout. Additionally, some of the State Library's specific tasks related to the goals for the 2013 biennium are provided for you on page 4 of the handout.

The Montana State Library has two major divisions: the Digital Library and the Statewide Library Resources Division. Administrative support is provided through a small central services section, and information technology support is provided through our Digital Library division.

First I will talk about the Digital Library, which includes Library Information Services, Montana Natural Heritage Program, and our Natural Resource Information System View pages 6 and 7 of your handout for highlights.

The Digital Library, a very specialized library that manages government and natural resources information, is being transformed by the digital evolution. You are each provided an informational booklet titled "Legislative Snapshot 2011" which contains Montana-related statistics as well as information uniquely customized to your particular Senate district or the Senate district in which your House district is located. This booklet is a product created by our Digital Library Division and demonstrates the benefits of linking traditional library research services with modern information technology. I'll use this information packet to discuss each of the programs in the Digital Library.

Contained in the snapshots are statistics, maps and information on Montana's economy, demographics, educational system, natural resources, wildlife, libraries and more. I hope over the next few months and beyond that you will find that these legislative snapshots provide you with the quality information you need to make decisions critical to Montana's future.

Some of the materials represent research conducted by our Library Information Services staff as they fulfill a more traditional library role. These six staff manage the Montana State Publications Center, a statutory service of the State Library. Additionally they offer federal publications select and maintain electronic journals and on-line subscription databases for use by our patrons, and they have the content knowledge to help you find the answers you need from the overwhelming amount of information available to you.

Library Information Services is actively engaged in a project to digitize our existing print collection through a partnership with the Internet Archive. MSL chose to contract with the Internet Archive to complete this project because it is the most cost effective option available. Cost aside, it is clear that this was the right decision as our patrons benefit from the numerous technological enhancements this organization adds to the online Montana State publications we make available.

The Wildlife and Recreation pages in your legislative snapshot provide wildlife information specific to the region that contains your district. Much of this information came from the State Library's Montana Natural Heritage Program. We all know that Montana's natural resources are critical for our citizens and economy, and are essential to our quality of life. Good information regarding our state's plants, animals, and habitats is necessary to maintain this natural heritage as the state continues to grow and develop. Ready access to this information saves everyone time and money.

For more than 25 years, the Natural Heritage Program has provided an objective, one-stop source for information on Montana's animals, plants, and habitats. As another statutory program of the State Library, The Natural Heritage Program provides access to its information and services in an objective and neutral manner. As part of the Digital Library, The Heritage Program provides ready access to information on Montana's animals, plants, and habitats to resource managers, Montana businesses, landowners, educators, students, and recreationists. Heritage data products, including the Montana Field Guide and web-based mapping applications, are used extensively every day. Each year several thousand requests are filled by our expert staff while our web resources receive tens of thousands of hours of use around the clock seven days a week.

The last section of our Digital Library, also required by statute, is the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS), which provides comprehensive access to data about Montana's natural resources through

the dissemination of location-relevant information in formats such as maps and online mapping services. NRIS staff works with state and federal agencies to acquire the most current information available. We then aggregate this natural resource information and share it in an easily referenced format.

Examples of information in your booklets made available by NRIS with the help of our partners include information related to land, water, forest ecology, fire, drought and energy development. The tables and maps in the legislative snapshot show the power of integrating information from multiple sources, making it relevant by placing it in geographic context, and allowing users to view data for a particular area, be it a legislative district, a county, a watershed, or other geographic area. Additionally, the legislative district maps at the back of the booklet are only one example of the hundreds of map themes provided in cooperation with agencies and made available through our NRIS program. These maps can be customized by our patrons and displayed on-line, imported into reports, or downloaded for printing.

In 2008 with funding from the Legislature, NRIS launched the Montana GIS Portal. The Portal functions much like an online library catalog. Users can search for geographic information by subject, geographic area, title, publisher, and more. This portal is designed to assist geographic information professionals as well as the general public as they find and use geographic information about Montana. Like the value in biological information provided by the Natural Heritage Program, geographic information is critical to the well-being of the state. The Geographic information that is provided by the GIS Portal helps inform citizens on everything from how to improve farmers' irrigation to helping foresters manage pine beetle in our national forests. An information summary, like the ones you'll find in your legislative snapshot, would not be possible without the cooperation of our partner agencies as well as the foresight of previous legislative bodies who understood the value of making quality natural resources information available to all through an unbiased, non-regulatory agency like the State Library.

Now I will discuss briefly the Statewide Library Resources Division, which includes Library Development, Montana's Talking Book Library, and the Montana Shared Catalog.

Our Library Development division, also known as LDD, is key to excellent library services across Montana. This program focuses on concerns of libraries across the state, including the libraries **in your home towns**. With operations based in Helena as well as in three other sites statewide, a professional staff plans, develops, and implements programs on topics such as budget preparation, long range planning, public library standards, training, computer networking, and library automation.

This staff administers funds for new and improved services throughout Montana. For example, the current statewide Pilot Courier Service funded with one time only monies in 2009, currently serves 38 libraries in Montana communities. During the first 8 months of the pilot, these libraries saved over \$63,000 in resource sharing costs over the use of traditional shipping methods.

Library Development, required by statute, provides access to Montana online library catalogs, they partner with Montana libraries to ensure the delivery of quality library materials to all Montanans and they manage joint purchases of statewide services. Statewide contract negotiations have resulted in expanded information content such as career databases, car repair databases, better Internet connectivity and more computers in libraries for all Montanans to access.

And, as the field of librarianship evolves, LDD provides educational opportunities as well as professional publications to help keep Montana librarians aware of the new trends in traditional as well as electronic library services.

Library Development also produces the Montana Library Directory and annual volumes of public library statistics. Libraries use these important publications to evaluate their library services and to provide quality information for county and city commissions faced with their own budget challenges.

The Library Development staff has received funding for several grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the United States Department of Commerce Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. These grants-funded scholarships encourage and enable Montanans to become professional librarians and support public access to the Internet in public libraries. These resources are helping Montanans in many ways. For example, Montana's displaced workers use their libraries to learn about job opportunities, compile resumes, interview for jobs online, and complete licensing and certification testing requirements.

Another statutory section of the State Library is Our Talking Book Library which provides library services for individuals who are not able to read traditional print and provides the only access point for Montana citizens to the National Library Service's Talking Book collections.

Our Talking Book library, which is staffed by only six FTE and over 100 volunteers, includes approximately 67,000 book titles, as well as magazines, descriptive videos, and a children's collection. We provide reading materials to approximately 3,500 Montana citizens with vision or other physical disabilities. Each year we circulate over 157,000 materials to Montanans who have no other place to turn for library resources.

Most of the audio books are provided by the National Library for the Blind, which also provides the play back machines and accessory equipment. The newest machines, the digital readers, are hugely popular and were distributed first to Montana's veterans and our state's oldest citizens this last year.

In order to provide our patrons with access to Montana authors and other titles that may be of interest to Montanans, we operate two recording studios – one at the State Library and one at the Montana State Prison. These studios provide the most advanced equipment available and The Talking Book Library's recording project records an average of 50 Montana-related publications every year, nearly all through volunteer time.



Finally, The Montana State Library, through the Montana Shared Catalog, has helped libraries share information in ways no one previously could have imagined. Thirty years ago Montana libraries mailed a "ticker tape" list of books needed by their patrons to all other participating libraries in the state, hoping that one library might have the needed book and share it. The process could take up to six weeks. Today, we have the Montana Shared Catalog – what used to be found in the card catalog at each of these local libraries is now joined with catalogs from all participating libraries, on-line for you to search, anytime, from anywhere over the internet. You can find the book you want and obtain it, even if it is not in your local library's collection. And in many cases you can have it in your hands the next day thanks to the Montana Shared Catalog. The Montana Shared Catalog currently serves over 450,000 Montanans, 88 Montana communities, 133 libraries, and 360 librarians.

I would like to begin to conclude my presentation by briefly addressing some of the direct questions your staff asked of us:

**What was the agency thought process behind developing this budget?**

Knowing that the overall guidelines for budget development for the 2013 biennium are that there are to be no new monies and reductions are a must, last year the State Library managers developed a chart of all services, answering each of the following critical questions:

- Is the service required by statute?
- Is the service provided elsewhere by another agency or program?
- Is the service included as part of our strategic plan?
- Is the service used by our partners and patrons including Montana citizens?
- How many FTE are involved in providing the service?
- What is or are the funding source(s)?
- Do the services provide part of a match or maintenance of effort monies?
- How interwoven are they with services?
- What are the reduction impacts now and in the future?

The results of our budget review process were shared with our Commission at open public meetings and we continually ask our partners and patrons what their priorities are for the State Library's services. Our philosophy continues to be to provide those services that are most critical to meeting our public purpose in the most cost effective manner possible.

## What challenges did the agency face in budget development?

Looking at page 10 of the handout, the challenges we face include.

- Balancing needs of multiple projects, products and services;
- Meeting citizens' expectations, as one Librarian recently stated "But really – you all provide so many valuable services, products and projects that it is impossible to pick one favorite! Even ranking the favorites would be tough – you know we just want everything!"
- As the economy shrinks and budgets get tighter in each Montana household, our local libraries get busier and busier. Citizens have been turning to libraries in record numbers to find internet access to look for jobs, to get information on legal and health issues, to find out how to start their own business, to complete public services forms, or to finish homework.
- We are one program as far as the legislative budget is concerned but in reality, and as I hope you've seen here today, we provide a multitude of services, many of which **you or your neighbors** will still have to discover as you turn to your local library for help with your information needs.

While a five percent reduction may not seem significant, the impacts that reduction places on staff, services, programming, and, on all citizens of Montana, is tremendous. For the State Library, a 5 % reduction would mean:

- Reduction of 2.25 FTE out of 30.5 current level FTE, a cut that seriously weakens the agency across the board.
- Critical impact on staffing, particularly on individual(s) whose jobs will be lost and on those services affected by lost positions.

- This reduction in personnel will directly and indirectly impact citizens of Montana. For example, if the Natural Resources Librarian position, which has been left vacant to meet vacancy savings requirements, is not filled, acquisition of new natural resource materials will be slower, outreach to agencies will be less routine and patrons may not know about all the information we can provide to them for their research. And if a support position is reduced, librarians will not get answers to their inquiries as quickly as necessary and remaining professional staff will be required to spend more time on administrative tasks.
- A 5% reduction will also significantly slow the process to digitize the state publications collection and will require longer replacement schedules for computers and other critical information technology.

I hope through my presentation that I've demonstrated some of the positive outcomes that result from the hard work of the staff of the State Library. **We are successful when you and the citizens of Montana have access to the information you need and when your libraries** can provide resources and expertise that, due to cost and/or lack of training would be out of reach for many of Montana's libraries.

Representative Hollandsworth, members of the Committees, I want to thank you again for your time and for the consideration you give to the State Library. So much of what we do is based on things that we fear might make your eyes glaze - words like shared catalogs, digital state publications, courier pilot, GIS Portal or magazine databases. There's no passion in library couriers or on-line databases.

But there is passion in knowing and meeting the needs of the people we serve. I want to remind you that, while you may have thought that libraries are all about books, and more recently computers, we are really about people. Libraries are the key behind the basic needs of the people of Montana – needs like economic development, good education, informed policy development and responsible resource management.

Across the country, libraries are reporting significantly increased use in these hard times. Montana is no exception. Throughout the state, libraries are reporting record use of their public access computers – something we help provide for libraries through the provision of grant money – by folks that need access to the Internet for everything from completing research for a school report to filing for unemployment or that new job application.

Whatever your previous level of familiarity with the State Library was, I hope that you walk away from my presentation with one thing in the forefront of your mind: The Montana State Library changes lives – all over the state – in good times, but perhaps even more so in bad times. Libraries are critical for the just, efficient, and effective distribution of quality information in a digital age, and are vital in a democracy founded on the principle of an educated and inquisitive citizenry. More immediately, the

services we provide, with our small staff and our big innovations, are sometimes the only services where people can turn for hope – hope of cutting business costs, hope of finding the right scholarship to pay for college, hope of being able to read again after losing sight, hope of finding the answer or the book or the form or the map or the publication they need to move forward with their lives.

I extend an invitation to you to visit the State Library any time. We hope you will accept the Montana Library Association's invitation to join us at the State Library on January 18. You have a hard-working staff at your State Library. Please support the State Library so we can continue to do great work.

Again, thank you for your time and please let me know if you have any questions.